LIS 525

Spring 2013

Dr. Sylvia Lloyd

Anna Rauvenpoor

Writing/Research Essay

It might seem obvious that a librarian will have excellent research and writing skills but when I began the MLS program at UB mine were rusty at best. I chose a literature review that I completed for LIS 505 Introduction to Library and Information Studies for inclusion in my portfolio because I sweated bullets over this paper. The instructor was very particular about following APA style in all aspects of the paper’s composition and I’d never even written a literature review before. I began worrying about this paper the minute we received the syllabus in class on the first day. In retrospect that was probably the best thing that could have happened because it encouraged me to begin my research. That same semester I was taking LIS 518 Reference Sources and Services where I learned how to really use electronic databases for research. I took my time reading the material and synthesizing the information. This part of the process was so important; understanding the subject matter and the available research. I used EndNote X5 for the first time to organize my sources and found it to be a wonderful tool that I would encourage high school students to use with their research. This paper demonstrates that I possess the research and writing skills required to guide and support information literacy skills as well as produce professional correspondence and reports.

The second artifact in the Writing/Research portion of my portfolio is a pathfinder I compiled for LIS 518 Reference Sources and Services. This pathfinder was constructed to aid in the research of topics related to the subject of iconic architecture. It is meant to serve the architecture and/or urban planning student at either the undergraduate (upper level) or graduate levels of study. The pathfinder aids in the identification and exploration of notable works of iconic architecture and the architects that design them. Some of the areas of research the pathfinder explores in relation to iconic architecture include: placemaking, municipal identity, public service, capitalist globalization, transnational capital class development, and sustainability. I chose this artifact for inclusion because it demonstrates my ability to provide authentic research assistance in the form of a well-compiled and annotated pathfinder. I included reference sources, websites, audio/visual material, books, newspapers, and periodicals in the pathfinder and each source was carefully researched and annotated. I discovered when compiling this pathfinder that annotations can be difficult to write but that writing them can prove helpful in determining whether or not a source should be included in the final product. As a future school library media specialist I would create a variety of pathfinders for my students based on curricular needs. I believe pathfinders add substantial value to the research process by providing quality sources for the student to explore. I would also use a pathfinder creation project as a creative method for teaching research and writing skills to students. Teaching students the skills necessary to create their own pathfinders means that they are learning to locate, evaluate, and manage information while thinking critically about information resources.